

Directorate-General for the Presidency
 Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments

Factsheet: The German Bundesrat



1. At a glance

The German Basic Law stipulates clearly that "the Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic and social federal state" and that "except as otherwise provided or permitted by this Basic Law, the exercise of state powers and the discharge of state functions is a matter for the *Länder*".

The Bundesrat has a total of 69 full Members and the same number of votes. The Bundesrat is composed of Members of *Länder* governments and not of directly elected Members. Since elections in the 16 German *Länder* take place at different times, the political composition and the majority in the Bundesrat often changes. It is in fact the executive power of the *Länder* which is represented in the Bundesrat. The *Länder* governments do not need a formal parliamentary mandate for their voting behaviour for individual acts in the Bundesrat.




2. Composition

Land	Population, m	Minister-President	Votes	Parties in government
Baden-Württemberg	10.75	Winfried Kretschmann (Grüne/Greens-EFA)	6	Grüne/CDU (Greens-EFA/EPP)
Bayern	12.52	Markus Söder (CSU/EPP)	6	CSU (EPP)/Freie Wähler(tbc)
Berlin	3.42	Michael Müller (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/Linke/Grüne (S&D/GUE-NGL/Greens-EFA)
Brandenburg	2.53	Dietmar Woidke (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/CDU/Grüne (S&D/PPE/Greens)
Bremen	0.66	Andreas Bovenschulte (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/Grüne/Die Linke (S&D/Greens-EFA/GUE&NGL)
Hamburg	1.77	Peter Tschentscher, (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/Grüne (S&D/Greens-EFA)
Hessen	6.07	Volker Bouffier (CDU/EPP)	5	CDU/Grüne (EPP/Greens-EFA)
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	1.67	Manuela Schwesig (SPD/S&D)	3	SPD/CDU (S&D/EPP)
Niedersachsen	7.97	Stephan Weil (SPD/S&D)	6	SPD/CDU (S&D/EPP)
Nordrhein-Westfalen	17.97	Armin Laschet (CDU/EPP)	6	CDU/FDP (EPP/ALDE)
Rheinland-Pfalz	4.04	Malu Dreyer (SPD/S&D)	4	SPD/Grüne (S&D/Greens-EFA)
Saarland	1.03	Tobias Hans (CDU/EPP)	3	CDU/SPD (EPP/S&D)
Sachsen	4.21	Michael Kretschmer (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/SPD/Grüne (EPP/S&D/Greens) (tbc) ¹

¹ Coalition talks ongoing

Land	Population, m	Minister-President	Votes	Parties in government
Sachsen-Anhalt	2.40	Rainer Haseloff (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/SPD (EPP/S&D)
Schleswig-Holstein	2.84	Daniel Günther (CDU/EPP)	4	CDU/Grüne/FDP (EPP/Green-EFA/GUE-NGL)
Thüringen	2.28	Bodo Ramelow (Die Linke/GUE)	4	Die Linke/SPD/Grüne (GUE-NGL/S&D/Green-EFA)

3. Officeholders

President of the Bundesrat	Chairperson of the Committee for EU Affairs	Chairperson of the Europakammer
 <p>Dietmar Woidke (SPD/S&D) Minister President of Brandenburg since 1 November 2019</p>	 <p>Guido Wolf (CDU/EVP), Baden-Württemberg</p>	 <p>Sabine Sütterlin-Waack (CDU/PPE) Schleswig-Holstein</p>
<p>Secretary General of the Bundesrat: Ms. Dr. Ute RETTLER, Staatssekretärin und Direktorin des Bundesrates (since 1 April 2015)</p>		

4. Relations with Members of the European Parliament

Participation rights for German MEPs in plenary sittings	Within the discretion of the President
Participation rights for German MEPs in committee meetings	Within the discretion of the Committee
Availability of videoconferencing system in German Federal Council	No

5. Information links

- Official website: <http://www.bundesrat.de/>
- [Rules of procedure in English](#)
- [List of committees](#)
- [Recent documents submitted by the Federal Council to the Interparliamentary EU Information Exchange \(IPEX\)](#)
- [European Parliament Information Office in Berlin](#)

6. Contacts

<p>Factsheet author and contact in the EP Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments: Mr Ulrich Hüschen Office MTY 8R001, 1047 Brussels Phone +32 2 284 4870 ulrich.hueschen@ep.europa.eu</p>	<p>Brussels-based contact of the German Bundesrat: Vacant Please contact Michael Reinold michael.reinold@bundesrat.de; national.representative@bundesrat.de</p>
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